

Murray Arts Advisory Board
Minutes for June 16, 2009

Attendance: Jared Shaver, Mary Black, Mildred Horton, Judy Baxendale, John Madsen, Sharon Whitney, Elaine Judd, Mary Ann Kirk, Howard Wilson (Taylorsville Arts Council Chair).

Excused: Kathleen Sorenson

1. Minutes for May 19, 2009 were approved as written. Mary Ann explained Galen Campbell resigned and Jen Davies has been recommended for the position.
2. The Utah Arts Council will meet with Mary Ann to talk about our needs. We will be discussing the Change Leader Program, grants, and opportunities to share with other arts councils. Mildred will attend. Mary Ann mentioned she would invite the board to the annual conferences in the future.
3. A total of 183 people attended the first concert, Sunshade and Rain, which was moved to the high school because of rain. The jazz and swing band was stopped mid way through the second half because of rain. We have sold a total of 118 season tickets which is significantly lower than last year. Beauty and the Beast has also experienced very difficult weather situations. They wondered if they could move indoor but this defeats the purpose of an outdoor venue. The show involves a large cast with many Murray families. Murray High is also very expensive to rent. We will watch how our gate sales are affected by the economy and the weather.
4. A musical program by Steve James which is focused on anti-violence theme has been arranged for each elementary school as part of Red Ribbon Week. It involves all of the children learning music and performing for an assembly and a parent night. This connects the arts with a social issue.
5. We only had one music entry but the judge felt it was worthy of an award. The composer will play the guitar composition at July 4th community talent show.
6. We did not qualify for the stimulus grant because they changed the criteria to allow only for staff that had been eliminated which we did not experience - we really have no one to eliminate since we only have one administrator and one part time museum staff. We did write a large grant of \$120,000 for arts-in-education which would help reduce the amount of funding we put in for the music specialists.
7. The arts budget was not cut but it did not include the amphitheater design which needs to be done before we can proceed with any kind of application to the county.
8. Mary Ann explained that we want to design an arts facility that helps serve other surrounding communities because the county won't have enough money to build an arts facility in every city. Howard Wilson from Taylorsville felt schools don't work well with the art communities. He feels the school districts are locking the community out of their facilities. The principals have the authority to approve or disapprove for outside facility use. They require a large amount of staffing for outside rentals which creates a very high rental fee. Mildred said Murray schools work extremely well with us but they are so busy. Mary Ann said that Murray charges us just for the supervision and tech. It is much lower than surrounding communities.

Howard explained they do three theatre productions, one visual art show, and the Taylorsville Symphony provides several performances. They typically do five performances with 200 people a night attending. They will not be adding additional programming. They have used a fire station, school facilities, an old church that will no longer be available, and SLCC facilities. The SLCC amphitheater requires a great deal of personnel for security. They get some funding from the city and grants. SLCC provides a rehearsal space and one performance and pays for the instructor for the symphony. They do not charge for concerts. Taylorsville does have property to build an amphitheater (500) which would share a stage that is part of an indoor facility. The property may also be used for a senior center or a community center. They would like a prop shop.

Mary Ann reviewed the design for our performing arts center. Mary Ann felt that each community would still want some kind of rehearsal facility in their own community. She wanted to know if there was any specific facility need which we don't have currently in our facility that could serve Taylorsville. The big question is - can we work together on the performance element of a regional facility? Howard would have to talk with his group, but he did feel they might be interested in using a regional facility if they can't accommodate their needs with their own facility options. Jared asked if travel to Murray would cause a problem. Howard didn't think that would be a problem because cast members come from all over the valley. Mary Ann noted that our proposed facility has a variety of spaces that could be used for different types of rehearsals and performances. Murray is a little closer to Taylorsville than the Sugar Factory in West Jordan which is also on the master plan. The Cultural Celebration Center ran their own arts council out by charging too much. They book many Hispanic birthday parties at a steep price. They are booked out a full year on weekends.

Jared noted that the county wants the communities to work together. He said the goal is to get communities to talk together and decide what components they can build together. Mary Ann said Murray is the geographical center for a performance venue but the surrounding communities should have some kind of local facility such as a blackbox that can serve a community needs for rehearsals or a small production. She said Murray has the most community art groups and it would be difficult to move them to another community. But Murray would use the facility about 1/3 of the time. Mary Ann said we could work performances from other communities into a coordinated calendar or season at a regional facility. Jared suggested we could alternate dates for different communities so each group gets a preferred time. A season ticket would be very easy to implement. Jared wants to make sure the facility is used but not abused. Jared feels if the facility is properly managed, it will not only pay for itself, but it could make money. Mary Ann did acknowledge that we must leave some space for community rental needs. There will be other private groups who want to use it.

Jared suggested that Mary Ann visit the other arts councils and their leaders individually to talk about these same issues. Mary Ann suggested we also talk to the county about what needs they have for their programming. Mary Ann did note we will be meeting with the Utah Watercolor Society who is interested in putting some money toward our facility if they can use the gallery space.